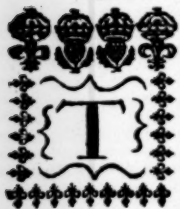


To the Right Honourable, the LORD MAJOR, and the Right Worshipfull, the ALDERMEN,
and Common Councill of the City of LONDON.

The humble Petition of divers Citizens of this Honourable Citie.

SHEWING,



THAT the Afflictions and sorrowes of our hearts are unexpressable in regard of the manifold miseries that are upon us and thousands of our deere brethren, and fellow Citizens, complaints being generall, and very grievous. As amongst many other, 1. That the Poore is in great necessity, wanting wherewith to set themselves on worke, their Children uneducated, and thereby prepared to wickedness and beggery. 2. That trading is exceedingly decayed, whereby thousands that have lived in a free & plentifull way, are many fallen, and are more falling in great extremity. 3. That assessments are made very unequal, whereby the taxes laid upon the Citie, are made burdensome and paid with much repining. 4. That the Forces of the Citie are very much abated, and that the Citie is not in a posture of Warre, answerable to its greatnesse, or to its danger. And though there hath not been wanting continuall endeavours of judicious charitable persons to prescribe remedies for these grievances, Yet our miseries is such, that wee are in effect debarred from opening our griefes, or proposing our remedies to any that hath power to helpe us. For if we motion our going to the Parliament immediately (as was usuall and successfull in former times) our mouthes are presently stoppt with this prejudiciall rumour. That the Parliament will not receive any Petition from Citizens, but by the Common-Councell, whereupon few or none will move in that way, though there be never so urgent necessities. If wee propose to goe through the Common Councell, sad experience hath proved it so difficult to obtaine a Common Councell, that men are weary in pursuance thereof. The Lord Major and Aldermen challenging to themselves Prerogative of calling Common Councells onely when (they see cause) also that nothing shall be debated, but what hath been first presented to the Court of Aldermen, and that after debate, the Lord Major hath a negative voice or power to Null or frustrate all that hath been debated by refusing to put to Vote, or by dissolving the Court at his pleasure. By which Prerogative Rules, if the Lord Major will not, or cannot preserve the Citizens from miseries and destruction, Will not heare our complaints, nor be sensible of our necessities, The whole power of the chosen Common Councell men, may not interpose or use any meanes for our preservation and reliefe. We willingly give all due honour to the Lord Major and Aldermen in reference to their particular Offices. But that the safetie and well-being of so great a people should depend upon the understanding and affections of so few, And that the whole Citie must be without a just meanes to preserve themselves, Or to remedy things that are any wayes amisse, except the Lord Major and Aldermen will assent, And that those whom the people yearly choose, and principally intrust, should be made uselesse at their pleasure. And themselves estated with such a power, that no Authority in the Citie can call them to an account in cases of mis-government, is so perniciously obstructive and intollerable, as is not to be pleaded, but to the enslaving of the people.

Whereas of Right, the people of this Citie are a free People, and are not to be bound or concluded, but by their own consents, or by the major part of those they yearly choose to give their consents in Common and free Councell, who are Commoners chosen from amongst themselves, with reference to their Consciences and good affections. In whom the concluding law-making power of the Citie justly is. It being destructive and improper that it should be estated in two distinct jurisdictions. And therefore, since wee have none to open our griefes unto, but unto you, And that it is thought convenient that wee should apply our selves to this Court in whatsoever we desire to present unto the Parliament. Wee most earnestly intreate you to shake off all pretences of Prerogatives, by which (and the like) the Citie and Common-wealth have been most grossely enslaved, and that you will reduce your selves into so proper and just a method of proceeding, as may stand with the condition of a free people, and conduce to the remedying of all grievances, and removall of all our afflictions. Unto which end we humbly propose to your grave consideration, as followeth.

1. That you will be pleased to order a Court of Common Councell once every weeke to meet without warning upon a certaine day, and expresse houre, and to publish the same, that all the inhabitants of the Citie may be informed thereof.

2. That you will also publish your readinesse to receive all Informations and Petitions from any of the inhabitants there, having been many most necessary and usefull things sifted for want of encouragement in this kind.

3. That you will resolve within your selves, to maintaine the Essence and freedome of your Court, As namely, To take into your considerations, and freely to debate whatsoever the present Major part shall think meet and necessary. To vote and conclude whatsoever to the Major part shall seem good. To continue the present Session or Court, as the present occasions shall require, To adjourne to what day and time shall by the Major part be thought convenient over and besides the set weekly Court, without which, and the due observations of all reasonable Orders, as by your wisdoms shall be provided, you will appeare to every judicious understanding, but as a meer shadow of Power and no waies helpfull. And therefore

4. That you will be pleased to make a perpetuall standing Order or Law, that whatsoever Person or Persons shall from henceforth by secret or open meanes endeavour to deprive the Court of Common Councell of the foresaid Rights, Freedoms or Priviledges (in the vindicating whereof some members of this Court then Commoners exprest much zeale against the obstinate Lord Major Gurney, and his perverse associates) shall be instantly disfranchised, and otherwise punished, as shall seem good to the Justice of this Court.

These wee most earnestly intreate may be speedily established, as being the only meanes to encourage your Petitioners, and all other well-affected People, to studie and present you with such materials as may happily tend to give a speedy end to all our miseries

And wee shall ever pray, &c. *m wallon m. gant*

This Petition was delivered the 15. of April. 1645. to the Common-Councell of London, 48
sitting at Court-mall.